Short guides

BIOS
British and Irish Orthoptic Society

Wearing glasses

A short guide for patients and carers

This leaflet answers common questions about why your child needs glasses, how their vision is assessed, and what to expect as they adjust.

How does the specialist know my child needs glasses?
When the pupil is enlarged with drops, the specialist has a good view inside the eye. By moving a line of light across the back of the eye, it is possible to measure what strength of glasses are needed.

Will my child always need to wear glasses?
This will depend on the child's age, the strength of the glasses, and other conditions present. Your orthoptist will be able to answer this question for you.

Should my child wear glasses all day?

In most cases, yes. If the glasses are not needed full time, your orthoptist will tell you.

My child claims to see better without the glasses or the glasses appear misty.

This is a very common complaint in the early days of wearing glasses. Your child has been struggling with reduced vision for some time, and now the brain and eyes have got to learn to work together with the help of glasses. This can take some time and initially the glasses may not help the child very much. Please persevere - this is a very important stage of the treatment.

The glasses look very strong!

If you do not wear glasses or your glasses are for a different condition, your child's glasses may look odd to you. We prescribe the glasses that will help your child to achieve the best possible vision.

What are long sight, short sight and astigmatism?

Long sight - is caused by the eye being too small, so that the rays of light entering the eye focus behind the retina (back of the eye) instead of on the retina. Long sighted children may have reduced vision for near and distance.

Short sight - is caused by the eye being too large, so that the rays of light entering the eye focus in front of the retina instead of on the retina. Short sighted children have reduced vision for near and for distance, but it tends to affect distance vision more.

Astigmatism - in addition to being long or short sighted, your child's eyes may be an irregular shape and, as a result, vision is affected at all distances.

The glasses keep falling down!

We recommend seeing a dispensing optician for proper fitting of glasses.

How do I find out more about my child's eyesight?

Ask any of the eyecare professionals involved with your child's treatment and they will be able to answer any specific questions you may have.

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Produced: February 2026.

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